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News Release

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Three plead guilty to operating interstate prostitution ring

MINNEAPOLIS— The last of three men pled guilty today in federal court in connection with operating a prostitution ring involving the transportation of both adult women and underage girls between Minnesota and Nevada.

Darryl Taylor, 43, formerly of Brooklyn Park, pled guilty to two counts of sex trafficking of a minor and one count of possessing documents in furtherance of sex trafficking. Previously, Tivon Bandy, 34, Minneapolis, and Kenwaniee Tate, 22, formerly of Brooklyn Center, pled guilty to conspiring with Taylor and others to violate federal law by engaging in sex trafficking of children by force, fraud or coercion and the transportation of minors for purposes of prostitution.

According to the plea agreement, the prostitution ring involved transporting women and girls between the Twin Cities and Las Vegas to engage in commercial sex acts for profit. The agreement also stated that force, fraud and coercion was used against the females.

The conspiracy began sometime in 1998 and operated through March 2005, according to the indictment. The indictment also stated that the defendants would transport juveniles, some as young as 15, and young women from both Minnesota and Wisconsin to Las Vegas to work as prostitutes, escorts or exotic dancers. According to the charges, the defendants used violence and the threat of violence to intimidate the females to work as prostitutes.

The investigation began in 2004 when a detective with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office learned that Taylor was apparently using the identity of another local man. Taylor, the indictment stated, also stole or received identification documents from the females to control them, and to allow underage girls to get jobs in strip clubs or escort services.

When Taylor was arrested in Nevada in 2005, he had more than 20 identification documents for different women and girls. In one case, a false name and age were needed so a girl could fly from Minneapolis to Las Vegas to work as a prostitute. The indictment stated that Taylor collected the money earned by the females and controlled their access to the money.

According to the indictment, Taylor encouraged witnesses to lie to authorities and, in one

instance, a witness believed to be cooperating with authorities was assaulted.

Taylor faces a potential maximum penalty of 40 years in federal prison. Bandy and Tate have cooperated with the investigation, and face up to five years each in prison for conspiracy. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, the Brooklyn Center Police Department, the Las Vegas Metro Police Department, and the Las Vegas and Minneapolis offices of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert M. Lewis.